

Teacher Linked in Torrance High School Cafeteria Theft Convicted



HERO HONORED—Thomas Nicholls, quick-thinking postman, was honored Tuesday by the Torrance Chamber of Commerce for his heroic action in snatching four tots out of the way of a run-away car in Waveria May 14. With Nicholls are the children whose lives he saved. They are Ritchie, Laura and Susan Loebel and Jerry Watson. Susan is held by postmaster Clara Conners. —Press photo

Prowell Faces Jail Sentence

Robert E. Prowell, 35, former Torrance High School teacher, faces a maximum 10-year jail sentence following his conviction by a jury of one count of receiving stolen property.

The popular former science teacher was found guilty of one count which charged him with receiving a hi-fi set stolen from the school cafeteria.

John Zamrzla, an ex-student of 2626 Cabrillo ave., testified that Prowell gave him an "A" in his science course, and paid him \$40 for the school property.

Prowell will be sentenced July 16 by Superior Judge Ralph K. Pierson.

Mixed Verdict

The seven-man, five-woman jury which deliberated for nearly 11 hours, acquitted the defendant on another count of receiving stolen property. This charge accused him of accepting four office machines stolen from Torrance High School.

The jury deadlocked on three counts of burglary which Prowell was also charged.

Zamrzla testified that the teacher accompanied him on the trip to the school cafeteria on the night the hi-fi equipment was stolen.

Prowell, of 2800 Chestnut ave., had taught at Torrance High School for six years, and was popular with his biology class students.

Found Property

Torrance police, who arrested Prowell Feb. 21, said they found the stolen property in the defendant's possession.

He signed a letter of resignation from his teaching post while still in jail on the morning following his arrest.

The district attorney's office said it does not expect to ask for a retrial of the burglary charges, unless the defendant is successful in obtaining a new trial on the one charge of which he was convicted.

Prowell shook his head in disbelief when the guilty verdict was read by the jury late Monday night.

He is free on bail pending sentencing.

Prowell testified in his defense that he did not know the property was stolen, and denied Zamrzla's statements that he had bribed the youth into stealing for him with money and high grades for his science course.

Shot Youth Sent To Prison Ward On Dope Charges

Daniel J. Brown, 18, of 25902 1/2 Oak st., Lomita, shot by police Friday morning, was transferred to General Hospital, Tuesday, where he was booked into the prison ward on felony narcotics charges.

Brown was shot when he tried to escape on foot after his car crashed into a parked vehicle at Newton st. and Winlock dr., following a 90 mph chase by police.

Sheriff's narcotics officers said they found marijuana cigarettes and seeds in the car, after they were called into the investigation by Torrance police.

Brown is said to be recovering satisfactorily from a hip wound.

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Commission Shakeup Is Ordered by Council Edict

Residents File Suit on Slides

Three damage claims alleging that the city was negligent in preventing soil erosion were submitted to the City Council Tuesday.

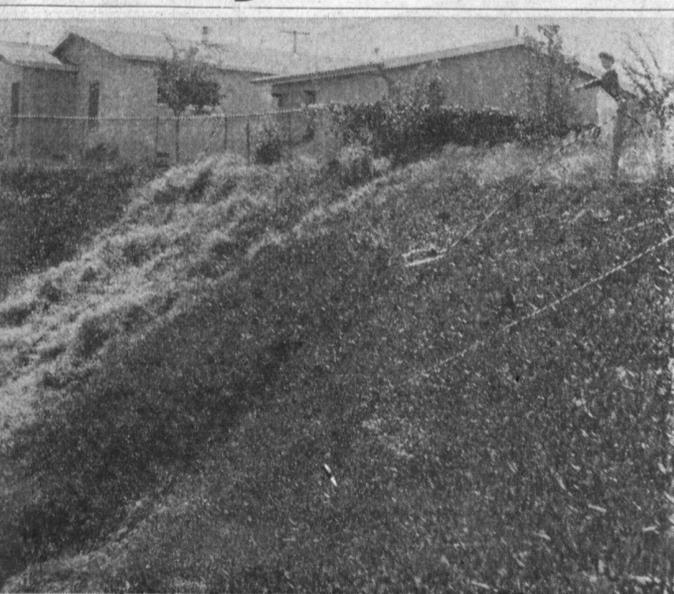
Three home owners on Grand Summit Road and Portobello ave., charge that cracks and other evidence of stress and related damage have appeared, and that the land has subsided.

The claimants assert that shifting of the earth is result of negligent and improper inspection of the subdivision. They charge the slides were caused by improper filling and changing the contour of the tract by a private contractor.

Asking \$25,000 damages each, are Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Borwanger of 2743 Portobello, and Mr. and Mrs. William Wade Johnson, of 2749 Portobello.

Claims for \$15,000 was submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Bruhn, of 2750 Grand Summit Road.

City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier said that neither the city nor city employees are responsible for any damage.



SLIDING SLOPE—Mrs. William Wade Johnson of 2749 Portobello ave., points down slope in rear of home where she said earth is shifting, causing cracks in her home and that of neighbors. Three damage claims for \$65,000 were filed against city by three residents, who charge city was negligent in inspecting fill work. —Press photo

Pay Cut for Clerk Decried

A series of ordinance amendments which will slash City Clerk A. H. Bartlett's salary and reshuffle two commissions, were proposed by the City Council Tuesday night.

By narrow margins, the Council instructed City Attorney Stanley Remelmeier to prepare changes which will cut the terms of Civil Service Commissioners from six to four years, pay \$10 fees per meeting to all city commissioners, and cut Bartlett's pay by \$200 a month.

The clerk's pay cut was protested by Councilmen Nickolas O. Drake, Willys Blount and George Bradford.

Not Whole Responsibility
"I don't think the clerk should be saddled with the whole responsibility for the fiasco. We are just as negligent and should accept the responsibility," declared Blount.

He was referring to criticism raised by the high cost of the last city election which was conducted by a private contractor instead of city forces.

Remelmeier presented a legal opinion in which he placed responsibility for conducting the election on the city clerk.

Councilman J. A. Beasley, who made the salary cutting motion, said it had nothing to do with the election. He explained that Bartlett is receiving an additional salary for collecting licenses and as purchasing agent, jobs he no longer performs.

Paid for Nothing
Beasley said that Bartlett is being paid for work he does not now perform, and that his department has requested additional clerical help.

Bartlett's basic salary, with the cut, was not immediately known, but was estimated at \$350 a month. He has held the post since 1922.

A motion to reduce the Planning Commission from nine to seven members and to specify that the chairman be elected by the commission, was tabled until next January, when the terms of two commissioners expire. They are Bert Lynn and John Mulvihill.

It was not immediately known what effect the ordinance to cut the terms of Civil Service Commissioners, will have on present members.

Only one commissioner, George Downey, has served more than four years on his present term, and could possibly be removed from the board if the change is made.

Torrance Night Slated by Dodgers

It will be "Torrance Night" at the baseball game between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Philadelphia Phillies, July 19 at the Los Angeles Coliseum.

Chairman J. H. Paget of the sponsoring Torrance Chamber of Commerce announced that tickets will be available starting June 20 at the Chamber office, 1345 El Prado. A special reserved section has been set aside for Torrance fans at \$2.50 a ticket. A few box seats will be available at \$3.50. Bus transportation will be available, and bus tickets may be purchased at the Torrance Bus Department, 1730 Torrance Blvd.

Arrangements have been made with the Dodgers to allow kids free admission if an adult accompanies each six kids. The adult will also receive free admission and seats will be in the general admission section. Reservations must be made in advance by calling the Chamber Office (FA 8-2814).

Former Major League baseball star and prominent Torrance resident, George Vico, is assisting Paget on the arrangements committee.

Any business firm wishing to sell tickets, is asked to contact the Chamber of Commerce.

Lone Motorist Robbed by Highwaymen in Waveria

For the second time in two weeks, highwaymen waylaid a lone motorist in the Waveria area and robbed him.

Robert Lee Gish, 31, of 3120 Dalemead st., told police he was returning home early Wednesday morning when another auto forced him to the side of the road at Newton and Tandem way.

The victim said that one of the suspects quickly stepped over to the side of his car and pointed a gun at him through the car window.

Gish reported he was forced to turn over his wallet to the gunman who was accompanied by a cohort who remained seated behind the wheel of the get-away car.

After stripping the billfold of \$32, the bandit dropped it casually to the ground and then demanded Gish's car keys.

He hurled them into a nearby field, jumped into his car and the pair roared off, leaving their victim stranded. He walked to a service station on Pacific Coast Highway and called police.

A similar hillside robbery was staged two weeks ago.

Torrance Seeks Superior Court

Request that a Superior Court be established in Torrance was made by the city council Tuesday.

The resolution asked that the board of supervisors provide both criminal and civil departments for a regional Superior Court which will serve Torrance and the South Bay cities now in the South Bay Municipal Court district.

The request adds that until the time such a regional court is established here, that criminal trials be assigned to the Inglewood Superior Court branch.

Presently criminal cases from Torrance are tried in Long Beach or Los Angeles.

Schools in 20-Cent Tax Hike

The Torrance School Board Tuesday night adopted an \$8.4 million tentative budget for the 1958-59 school year. The final budget will be adopted in August after a public hearing and after the district's income is finally determined.

The new budget probably will mean about a 20-cent hike in the school tax rate, which would be about \$3.64 per \$100 (of which about 55 cents goes for El Camino College). Under the new budget, the district would be collecting about 60 cents of the 73-cent override tax authorized by the voters in 1955.

An increase in assessed valuation of about \$17,000,000 also is assumed in the budget, although exact figures will not be known until next month.

LEGION DANCES
M. J. Coats, 2nd Vice Commander announces that the Torrance American Legion is now holding Saturday night dances free at the American Legion Hall 1109 Border ave. All are welcome to join them. Music by Mel Coats and his band.

Cyclists Hurt in Crashes

Two motorcyclists were flipped off their bikes in separate week-end collisions with autos and taken to Harbor General Hospital.

Henry William Campbell, 21, of 2114 Rocketteller Lane, Redondo Beach, suffered a slight concussion, a broken finger and neck injuries when he collided with an auto driven by Pauline Ruth Goggin, 48, of 4055 Bluff st., while she was turning into the driveway of her home, police reported.

Adolfo Grajeda, 24 of 2150 W. 203rd st., was spilled off his motorcycle into a field at Arlington ave. and Torrance Blvd., suffering minor bruises, officers said.

His motorcycle collided with an auto driven by Norma Simpson. (Continued on Page Two)

Three Gobs Razor-Slashed in Blue Note to Songfest

A song session started by three hitchhikers ended on a discordant note early Tuesday, when one of the riders ended up in jail, and three sailors in an emergency hospital following a razor-slashing brawl.

Joe W. Wadley, 21, a crew member of the USS Worcester, said he was driving to Long Beach with two companions, Bobby Ray Young, 20, and Richard Grannan, 20, when they picked up three hitchhikers.

The trio of hitchhikers started to do some loud harmonizing to which the sailors objected. An argument ensued, and Wadley stopped his car at Western ave. and 262 st., to throw the singers out, deputy sheriffs were told.

While two of the hitchhikers immediately hopped off, one of them, Jimmie Dean Sloan, 18, of 3153 W. 152nd St., allegedly whipped out a straight razor.

Attempting to disarm him, all three of the sailors received injuries.

Wadley was treated for an 8-inch gash on the abdomen, a 6-inch slash on the thigh and hand. Young suffered a cut hand, and Grannan a cut finger.

The three sailors finally managed to disarm Sloan, and turned him over to deputy sheriffs, who booked him on suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon.

Power Failure Shuts Douglas

A power failure which paralyzed an area east of Torrance and Gardena, yesterday resulting in the temporary shutdown of the Douglas Aircraft Torrance plant.

All day shift employees of the aircraft firm were instructed to leave their jobs at approximately 9:30 a.m., after officials were told by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power that it would take several hours to restore service.

Police, Firemen Renew Pay Pleas

A request for longevity pay and other fringe benefits was renewed by police and firemen as the City Council held its first hearing on the proposed \$3,981,000 budget.

Albert Salcido, representative of the firemen's union, pointed out that Torrance is served by fewer firefighters than comparable cities.

His request and that of Dave Cook, spokesman for policemen, were the only oral communications voiced during the first of two public hearings. Another hearing will be held next Tuesday.

Aerial Joyrider Steals Plane from Torrance Airport

A flying joyrider stole an airplane parked at Torrance Municipal Airport, took a four or five hour flight and returned the aircraft.

Arthur Klug, an electrician who reported the theft of his 1946 two-seater Taylorcraft to police, said that the borrower had damaged the right wing tip when landing.

The thief thoughtfully replenished the gasoline used in his flight, but did not replace 1 1/2 quarts of oil which were used.

Klug said the theft and recovery took place sometime between last Monday and Friday.

Dairy Owners to Launch Fly Spray Program Shortly

Dairy owners will take members of a home owners committee on a tour of a couple of the farms Saturday as part of a program to build better public relations.

Stan Voges, chairman of a dairymen's self-policing committee, said that a regular program of fly spraying will start shortly, as well as a plan to control manure.

He explained that dairies near residential areas will be sprayed every fourth day, while those not too close to homes, will be sprayed every six days.

The city council has continued a public hearing on an ordinance to ban dairies from the city for 90 days in order to give the dairymen an opportunity to convince home owners that dairies and homes can continue to exist side by side.

Northside Lions for Postal Change

North Torrance Lions Club this week backed a program for obtaining uniform mailing addresses for all parts of Torrance.

The letter, signed by Secretary Nat Mondato, supports the city council's resolution which asks that Torrance mailing addresses be given to those areas of the city which are now served by Redondo Beach, Lomita and Gardena post offices.



GAVEL EXCHANGE—Sam Van Wagner, left, receives gavel from Charlie Roberts, international counselor who installed him as president of the Torrance Lions Club. Van Wagner takes over the post from Pete Radisich, right, outgoing president. —Photo by Aladdin Studio.